1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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622 301 [727] [422] to the reigning chief. The others were formerly also property of the chiefs, but are said to have been given as rewards of merit to the most successful leaders in the Tiribi war. The two belonging to the chief, as well as one belonging to the descendants of one of those warriors, all represent birds. The people call them eagles. The largest is between three and four inches across; the smaller of the chief's two, is double-headed. In connection with these "eagles" another royal emblem might 293 be mentioned. It is a staff of hard black palm wood, over four feet long. 622 The top is carved in the shape of an animal, not unlike a bear sitting on [532] his haunches. But there are no bears in this country, and it must have been intended for some other animal. Below this figure, the stick is square, and is carved out into four pillars several inches long, with spaces between them. In the interior, between them, is a cavity in which a loose piece of the same wood can be shaken about. It was evidently left there in the carving, after the fashion of the Chinese. Below this, the stick is plain. I tried every means in my power to obtain this, but could not buy it.

525 Games of chance or of skill are equally unknown, and even when brought into contact with civilization, they do not seem to take kindly to gambling. In fact, they have so little to win or lose, and that little is so easily obtained, that the inducement does not exist.

262 Their food is simple in material and there is but little variation in the manner of preparation. Of meats, besides chickens, they have beef and pork, [251] which are however rarely used except at feasts. They know nothing of salting meat for future use and can only consume one of these animals when a large number is together. Besides the scarcity of beef is so great that probably no Indian possesses more than one or two animals at a time. [224] Wild meat, like peccary, red monkey, (the other species are rarely eaten,) tapir, tiger, even otter, armadillo, and some other small animals are oc- [25] casionally shot. In this case, all of the meat that is not eaten at once is dried as hard as a bone, and perfectly black, in the smoke of a slow fire. Larger species of birds like curassow are also treated in the same way. It is an interesting fact, universally attested, that the bones of this bird are absolutely poisonous to dogs, while the meat, though tough, is not unpalatable and is perfectly innoxious to man. After a meal it is the never-failing custom to gather all the bones carefully, and either burn them or place them out of reach of the dogs. I do not know whether the flesh would be equally dangerous, though I doubt if it was ever wasted on a dog. This property is said to be due to some fruit or seed they eat. Of vegetable food, plaintains are the staple. In times of scarcity, bananas take their place, besides being eaten raw when ripe. The Indians also occasionally eat a raw ripe plantain, although they are coarse 252 and the flavor is inferior. The methods of preparation are, roasted green, when they make a poor substitute for bread; roasted ripe, when they are eaten with chocolate, with the idea of sweetening it. They are also boiled green, with meat, with green corn, or even alone. Ripe plan-

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

golden eagles formerly common among them, the latter being much easier to make.

Headdress.—Pl. XXI represents a man's headdress made of the tail-down of an eagle, as described by Gabb. The pure white, fluffy feathers are attached in clusters to a woven cotton head-band of white with red stripes.

Pl. XXII shows another warrior's head-gear, the foundation of which is trade cloth, upon which, in front, are gummed alternate rows of blue and red feathers, with a crest of yellow.

Pl. XXIII, *a*, illustrates an old head-band consisting of a canvas fillet on which are mounted half a dozen long, draggled feathers of the red macaw.

While the Bribri wear no nose or cheek plugs, they say that this custom is still in vogue among some of the neighboring tribes. These ornaments are said to be made of tapir bone, and are three or four inches long, slender and cylindrical. When taken by the Bribri from a slain enemy, they are highly valued as war trophies.

Bark and Fiber Articles.—Besides the

[P. 48(A)] SA19 Talamanca SA19 Cabécar Terraba Changuena

173 Cabécares, and only a very few managed to
726 escape. The Terribís cut off heads,[181] cleaned
[727] them, and used them for cups. They cooked the heads and dried them well and then put them in certain houses.

The king of the Cabécares was furious. He gathered together people and went to Terribí where they killed some of their enemies. But still the Cabécares were frightened and many hid. The *usegLa* always remained at a great distance. One day, nevertheless, an *usegLa* was taken captive with other Cabécares and killed. The Terribís cut off ten heads but kept alive
[727] as prisoner a young girl who was niece of the *usegLa*. They tied and carried her, and she cried and cried. All this time the heads made an awful noise, which was more frightening as they still had their teeth. The *usegLa's* head took the lead and told the Terribís that the Cabécares would come and reap vengeance.

After a three days' journey, they reached the dwellings of the Terribís. The skull of the uncle continued to make noise, the teeth chattering horribly. In desperation, the Terribís tied the skull on a rope and hung it in a house. One night, however, the rope broke and the skull slipped out.

The people in the house thought some child had fallen when they heard a noise. They ran to look outside. There, on a barren hill, was a great jaguar who grabbed the Terribís one by one. The beast went from house to house until he had carried everybody away except the girl who remained crying. Then it was that *sibu* interfered and told the jaguar not to kill all the Terribís because he wanted some left. The jaguar had to obey.

In the early morning, the creature returned to the spot and said to the girl, "Don't be afraid even if I am dead and look like a jaguar. I am your uncle and I will take you home. I'll carry you across the rivers and over the mountains, but I'll leave you beside your house. As I am dead, I cannot enter. Just don't be afraid."

[172] [181] Trophy heads are common in Costa Rican archæology.

[648] [182] The Changuinas were allies of the British against the Spanish, the Cabécares on the Pacific side of the range, and the Borucas. Their home territory was along the Changuinola River in northwestern Panama. The British gave them scissors, knives, axes, beads, etc., and sent them across the cordillera to the

dance which was performed in a circle by men and women with one person singing but the whole group joining in the chorus. The song recounted the experiences during a hunt.

There are various dances held in connection with death and burial but they are seldom seen today outside of upper Talamanca.

Pittier[208] mentions a bone dance performed at the time of secondary burial by men if the deceased was an adult and by women if a child. The bone dance witnessed by the writer was carried out by a line of women and one of men. The person taking the place of the Singer (*see* Death) chanted the life history of the departed, and kept time with a gourd rattle. His four assistants in the line of men had drums under their arms which they beat as they danced.

A different bone dance which is a remnant of a war dance with trophy heads is occasionally performed when the medicine man is feeling particularly sure of himself and wants to celebrate. Men and women form a circle with interlocked arms. It is said that skulls were once balanced on the arms. Today, nothing is placed there. The men sing and the women join in the chorus singing *ékéké* meaning "good" or "well."

Songs. All sacred songs are basically Cabécar even though they may be sung in Bribri. The Medicine Man and sometimes the Burier sing these songs which are usually in ancient Cabécar and are not understood by the masses.

Lay songs are common to the Bribri and very rare among the Cabécar. The Bribri delight in inventing songs to fit the occasion. Both men and women like to sing and do so on the slightest provocation when working, bathing, washing, or minding the baby. The addition of words only for their sound is characteristic. Likewise, many Térraba words are found in Bribri songs, the meaning of which is unknown to the singer. In fact, the sung language permits all sorts of liberties as well as having a certain vocabulary of its own.

western Panama. The traditional home of the Bribri is in northwest Panama. *See* Stone, 1952, p. 252.

[207] Segarra y Julia, 1907, pp. 594–95.

[208] Pittier, 1938, pp. 25–26.